Fun for the Whole Family!

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Fun for the Whole Family!

by Lemonotangerines

Summary

They might look different- cyan with blue hair and covered in armor- but they're still that little human he once knew.

The one that wore that adorable horned headband while watching cartoons on his screen. Oh, how they would eat their mothers pie so messily, whipped cream covering their smiling lips.

How he wished he was there to rub them clean with his handkerchief… to hold them close as they watched him throughout those sleepless nights, while their mother and father fought upstairs.

To wipe the tears away and make them laugh again.

—

Or Kris and Tenna trauma bond through chapter 3 and things change because of it.

Or or Tenna and the Dreemurs are family and you can pry them from my cold dead hands.

Notes

I based most of this on how Tenna considers himself part of Kris' family and how personally if I was in Tenna's shoes, I would want to latch onto Kris and never let go, but would never actually allow myself to.

And then Kris became the main focus lol.

Reminder

Mr. “Ant” Tenna was… peculiar.

Not that that was a bad thing, no, he was just…

Weird.

He had appeared out of nowhere with a booming yet giddy voice, a giant smile on his screen. The antennas on his head nearly vibrated with energy as he almost shook with excitement. He was big, and talked even bigger, about games and fun and playing.

But, even though he was mostly talking to Susie and Ralsei… Kris could feel him staring at them. Despite the fact Tenna’s pale screen had none, his eyes were seemingly locked onto their body.

Their face.

Yet, it never felt hostile. It felt… almost disbelieving. Full of wonder. Like he couldn’t believe they were… here.

Of course, you didn’t notice any of this. You were an enigma to them, omniscient and yet blind and deaf to many things.

You played along with his games. Kris made sure you couldn’t input anything too crazy as their name, skipping over letters on purpose. They took mild satisfaction in watching you flip through the letters in confusion.

Still, Tenna seemed intent on giving you a stare down, even more prominent now that he wasn't talking. If they were reading him correctly, he looked… disappointed?

Why?

His feet shuffled a bit, as if he wanted to take a step closer but stopped himself. Again, his antenna twitched. Agitated now.

Longin-

Their hand pressed the confirm button, you having finally chosen a name. Kris felt a little disappointed themself it was just their name.

Tenna introduced them with glee, making jokes and little jabs at their group. He seemed different with Kris though. His body language is more relaxed. His smile widened as though he was telling an inside joke, just between them, between two old friends.

And it felt like it too.

A pang of guilt hit their chest. They remembered how watching tv felt after everyone was gone, how they avoided it until their mother eventually unplugged it all together.

And now, that tv they abandoned was right in front of them, overjoyed by their presence. Alive and happy to see them again. Nervous about another rejection.

And then suddenly, they are sitting on a couch, sandwiched between their friends as they are forced to look at the screen by you. A game he supposedly made himself plays, (though judging by the different title from the intro, it's obvious it's not.)

Tenna makes little comments here and there as you play. Mostly silly jokes that would pull a chuckle out of them if they could emote. But currently they can barely control themself as is.

Eventually, your iron grip on them slackens just a bit, and they can finally look around the room.

Susie and Ralsei are fully immersed in what's going on onscreen, but Tenna?

Kris can tell he's only half paying attention. The rest of it is on them. He's looking at them, a small smile on his face that twitches like it wants to curl downwards into a contemplative frown. His gloved hands twitch and clench every so often, restless. His electric gaze is focused on their hands, watching as they effortlessly press buttons without a care.

That gaze slowly travels up their arm to their shoulders, lingering for a second until landing on their face.

The darkener jolts as he realizes Kris is staring back at him and quickly looks back at the screen stiffly. But, his smile is bigger and more genuine, even as glass beads of sweat form on his screen.

Mr. Tenna is weird. But he's goofy and silly and very nostalgic, too.

You finish the game, and he just gets even more excited. His antennae (though they are already as straight as can be,) seem to stand up taller, shuddering as they strain to go higher. He urges them to go through the door, warning that it'll be grueling.

You hesitate however, and Ralsei tries to say something, but Tenna interrupts impatiently, stating he put too much of the budget into it to not use it.

Kris expects you to be annoyed, but they almost feel you chuckle within them. Even you are charmed by him.

And then they are in a small kitchen, standing on a bar counter in a waiter's outfit. Susie and Ralsei are behind them, freaking out. You aren't bothered.

Neither is Kris.

Tenna returns, going on a spiel about their mother and their brother and them all watching the cooking channel. He gets closer as he talks, to the point that they can feel the static of his body, and hear the buzzing of his screen. He smells electric, distinctly metallic and ozone-like with a hint of dust.

They wonder if he would shock them with a touch, like he would when they touched his screen to feel the thrum of electricity in their skin when they were little.

…Does he remember that?

Kris wishes they could speak to him, to scrutinize him with their eyes as he has done to them since they've arrived.

But you are in control, and you don't have their memories and their thoughts and their life. You only stare blankly ahead as Tenna explains how to play. He seems a little disappointed that Kris isn't responding or paying attention to him.

If only he knew.

The challenge was fun. Even though they couldn't really play, they could at least pirouette midair. You didn't have as much control while they were off the ground, so they got to do something entertaining.

Tenna seemed happy enough with their performance anyway, a bright smile on his screen. He had appeared next to them again, and this time, his hand barely grazed against their shoulder before quickly pulling away as a tiny zap of electricity hit them.

Seemed it had shocked them both.

Tenna smoothly moved on as if it didn't happen, but Kris knew they had felt it, even if they didn't fully see it.

It was so gentle.

For a moment, they could feel his hand on them and then…

It was as if it had transported them back to childhood. To when they

would press their head against the warm screen of their tv as cartoons played, and rub against it to feel their hair raise up and stick to it from static.

If their body was their own, they might've cried. Instead, you only stood still, stiff and uncaring of the overwhelming emotions within them.

Why does he keep doing this? Trying to get closer, to be near them? What purpose does this serve other than to remind them of things that'll never happen again, that'll never be the same again?

Tenna was like a reminder of everything that had gone wrong in their life. Because he was a reminder of how happy they were before and how much that has changed now.

And yet the world moved on.

The show was over, and Kris was glad. They didn't want to hang around the shadow of their past any longer.

Mr. "Ant" Tenna was weird, and nice, and too much.

Intermission

Chapter Summary

Tenna goes to see Toriel for the first time in person.

Chapter Notes

Short intermission while the next chapter is being edited and reviewed. (I finally have beta readers!!!)

Someone commented they wanted this, and it gave me an idea, so random commenter, this is for YOU!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It was cold.

He could feel steam puffing out from his air vents and his screen fogged up from the heat radiating from it.

He didn't care though. It wasn't important right now.

What was important was seeing *her*.

'*She's here! She's really here!*'

A laugh crackled through his speakers.

He was almost there now. As soon as Susie had left, he ran straight to her.

The harsh stage lights shone upon her capsule's plastic surface, a blinding sheen that threatened to blind him if he had eyes.

And there she was, sleeping peacefully inside.

Toriel.

His…

Thousands of titles and endearments rung through his mind, none fitting just right. He doesn't know.

But she's here! She's *real!*

She's beautiful. Even better than he imagined.

He missed her so much.

Without thinking, his gloved hands reach for her plastic casing, gently lifting her up to his screen.

It's funny.

She used to be so big compared to him.

…Is this what growing up feels like?

It hurts.

Condensation rolls down his screen, dripping onto the barrier between them in soft plunks.

She shifts a little, sighing softly.

He freezes, feeling his antennae flatten against his chassis. Slowly, carefully, he sets her back down. His feet crunch in the snow as he backs away.

He can't wake her up. Not now.

…maybe after this is all over…

He can finally get that hug he's always wanted.

He's seen it happen before, to Kris and Asriel.

It looks so comforting and warm.

They'd get squeezed so tightly as she pressed a kiss to their cheeks.

The thought makes his cords twist up.

…After.

Just one last board.

Sparing her one last (longing) glance, he finally retreats from her presence.

“…Sweet dreams, Tori.”

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter will be out soon I prommy…

Send comments they fuel me!!!

Familiar

Chapter Summary

The second round, and many thoughts and feeling about it.

Now with dialogue!

Chapter Notes

My beta readers finally finished helping me edit and so! Here it is!

This is also wayyyyy longer. Because you guys got me excited to write lol.

Also contains non graphic depiction of Tenna's wires. It's really not that serious but if you think that's disturbing, it starts at 'able to bend like cloth,' and ends at 'Smoothing down his suit and tie."

Figured I'd give fair warning.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

There was another round.

Another. Round.

Tenna's grin was wide as he said it, but Kris could tell…

He was panicking.

That irritated them. What was he worrying about? Enough to make him nearly hyperventilate while trying to convince their friends to keep playing.

How could neither of them notice the heavy breaths he was taking, or how his hands shook near imperceptibly while raised up in the air?

How could they not see all the little things?

Why weren't they watching him like they are?

After the "word" from the sponsors, they appeared in a green room. Tenna glided up to them, dancing, telling them to enjoy themselves and relax for a bit.

If Kris wasn't paying attention, they wouldn't have noticed how his breathing stuttered when saying "relax."

He left them, (though it felt more like a retreat,) leaving you to explore. You attempted to play a game with Susie, but you absolutely bombed it. Not that they tried to help. They might help with quizzes but this is a skill issue.

Ramb was nice, though still a bit painful to see. But that seems to be the case for this whole dark world. It hurts less than… him, though.

Lanino and Elnina… they were both a bit. dumb? silly? Not in a bad way, no, more like… a lapse in judgment.

It's clear to them they are perfect for each other, anyway. You decided they were bound for more love in their future, and Kris hoped it was with each other above all else.

You fought the water cooler, and barely survived by the skin of your teeth. It must be evil. Never again.

Doing the cooking show afterwards was almost just as bad. You lost to this game way too much the first time, why would you play a second time?

At least they got to pirouette again.

You avoided the S-rank room, and Kris wasn't too bothered to even wonder what was in there. Probably cushy, expensive furniture and snacks and makeup.

No thanks, cheap stuff tastes just as good (if not better.) Might be the food dye…

They didn't care for it and you didn't either.

Susie wanted to talk to Tenna, for tips or something. Kris didn't want to see him again, but luckily, Ralsei asked them to stay back and think. Unluckily, you didn't want to, and started talking about… his face.

Ugh…

———

Susie wasn't sure what to think about this TV guy. He was nice, funny, and just a little bit of a loser. There was something about him that

made her… feel bad?

Like seeing a puppy left outside. In the rain. For the rest of its life.

Ok, maybe he was a lot of a loser.

But he was fun, and so were his games.

Tenna was muttering something under his breath at the moment, fidgeting with the end of his tie. A hand pinched and smoothed it over repeatedly as the other touched the side of his head. His antennae were vibrating as electricity arched between them.

Susie could barely make out what he was saying.

Something about air holes and extra construction or whatever?

Must be a part of the next board.

She greeted him and watched as he flailed around before greeting her with a huge grin. He said so many nice things to her, which… she did not know how to feel about.

So she ignored those feelings, and just spoke her mind. About how fun this has been, and how she was concerned for Ralsei and how the show cheered him up.

That seemed to make Tenna ecstatic, as he rushed forward in joy. He

practically danced in happiness as he spoke about how much he loved everything, having her and Ralsei be a part of his show, that it was amazing to have them here!

…But something was off.

“Uh, what about Kris?” She asked, scratching the back of her head with a half smile.

Tenna’s screen flickered for a second, a small spark flying off. Drops of glass sweat beaded down his face as his smile wobbled.

“What… uh, heh, what about Kris?”

Susie frowned, expression cautious. “They were having fun, too. Don’t you… like them?”

The flicker returned, longer this time. It filled his screen with static as he flinched back, shocked by the question.

“Of course I care! They were one of my original viewers! My f- I watched-“ Tenna stutters and cuts himself off, antennae wilting back across his plastic casing. His hands twitch upwards back towards his tie.

Susie raised a brow, confusion etching across her scaly features.

“It’s just… I’m not sure that they…” he sighs, voice softer, “…that they love TV.”

The inquisitive purple monster's other brow raises to meet the other. What the heck does he mean by that?

Just before she could attempt to ask, the darkener's antennae shot up high and vibrated again, ringing just like a phone. He stiffens, hands raising up to his head.

"Oh, it looks like the next board is ready, go have fun out there, nice talking to you!" His voice was back to that game show pitch just like that, loud and confident. But there's just the slightest hint of shakiness within it, the evidence of their conversation and his true emotions.

Susie nods and slowly walks away, thinking about how strange this darkener is. But, all of them are, aren't they?

It's fine.

Probably.

———

Just as you finished chatting with Ralsei, Susie was back. She looked conflicted, but with your antics it was very quickly forgotten.

She said that the talk with Tenna had gone well, and she had come to the conclusion that he was just lonely.

Kris wasn't too sure about that.

He was surrounded by people who were attracted to him like magnets, constantly clapping and cheering for him.

How could he be lonely?

Susie continued, asking your opinion on him. You were going to call him fun, but they spoke before you could.

"He sucks."

Their voice came out as a mumble, raspy and quiet. Different from how you made them sound.

Susie's face scrunched, with a look of realization crossing over it.

She was surprised. To her, the voice was alien.

Wasn't normal Kris. Her Kris.

Real Kris could feel your agitation, and actively ignored it.

Feeling you sigh, they were forced to walk up to the game show door. Immediately after telling Ralsei you were ready to play, Tenna dropped down from the ceiling, grinning down at them

enthusiastically.

(What they didn't notice was the quickly drying liquid upon his screen, only the smallest droplets left.)

…Was he-

Was he eavesdropping on them?!

They wished they could grumble as they were transported back to their podium. Once again they could feel Tenna's gaze upon them. That look of disbelieving wonder was back, mixed with something more somber as well.

Wait a second.

Were they closer than last time?

The podiums were switched around, and now theirs was in the middle. Susie didn't seem to mind or notice, but Ralsei did spare a glance at them.

From Kris' new position, they could feel the electricity oozing out of Tenna. They had to admit, his presence really did fill up a room with a positive energy.

They remembered how they used to be able to feel when the TV was turned on from any room in their house. How they could feel the air shift and know.

Their chest felt warm.

It must be the spotlights.

Nothing else.

Tenna once again began to explain the next board, talking about tropical islands and getting a tan. You chuckled. They didn't.

Soon enough, they were back in the game room, the huge screen almost blinding them from the suddenness of it. Blinking away the shadows, they noticed your control wasn't as strong this time around.

Immediately, they looked about, just from the corners of their eyes.

The podiums weren't the only things switched it seems.

Kris and Ralsei had switched spots this time. Now they were right next to Tenna, something that made him nearly vibrate in place. Both of their friends had noticed the change, but didn't say anything about it, only frowning slightly.

The feeling of being watched was getting obnoxious now. Why must he always be looking at them? Kris purposely turned their complete attention towards the game, even if they couldn't play it.

They missed how a gloved hand inched towards their head, before backing away.

———

Eventually, Tenna had to leave. His antennae had rung, and he (reluctantly) slid out of the room.

Kris really only noticed his absence through the lack of warmth and quiet buzzing next to them.

They found themself wishing for his quick return, (a fact that bothered them,) wanting the soft heat he produced back.

Obviously it was just because they were cold, and this is in no way contradicting any previous statements whatsoever.

Definitely.

They watched you mess around for a bit. They almost snorted when Susie switched up the controllers. Kris took over just for a second to make Susie wear the pizza deodorant in return. They know how much she doesn't like ribbons, and wouldn't force that on her.

Deodorant on the other hand…

Ralsei wasn't pleased with the switch, but seemed to start having some real fun when Susie made him "player one" as he called it.

You made sure to be in the photo he took of the half flower, and pulled as many weeds up as you could afterwards.

They could feel you laugh as you picked up a seashell and tossed it at “Ralsei,” watching them take damage.

And then “Kris” found bombs and they were all back to normal.

Real Kris felt bad for Ralsei. It was obvious that he was upset at so quickly having his freedom snatched away. They can sympathize.

Tenna came back then, sitting back down close to Kris. You didn’t even look at him.

Feeling his presence return, a tension seemed to drain out of the both of them.

Kris refused to acknowledge this however, staring at the screen as if to melt it. Tenna started up with his commentary again, giving hints and making jokes like usual.

They didn’t realize, but as he talked, the more their body relaxed and sunk back into the cushions, leaning slightly. The hair on their arm started to raise up at the proximity, getting closer and closer until-

Zap!

Kris jolts upward while Tenna stutters in the middle of talking. They both got shocked again by touching him. His antennae shudder, unsure whether to stand up tall or lay down flat. A quick peek at his screen showed his pale color was replaced by a light pink as a goofy grin stretched across the glass.

"Hey now," Tenna chuckles, his large hand landing on Kris' shoulder. It barely fit, mostly just the tips of his gloved fingers. It felt- "…don't be getting sleepy on me, Kris!"

His hand rubbed gently against them, eventually sliding off after a moment of hesitation. It returns to his side, clasping together on his lap.

"You have to finish the game first, kid. Try and stay up till then!"

Susie, who had turned after Tenna had spoken the first time, snorted. "Really, Kris? You fell asleep again? Do you just not sleep at night?"

Ralsei looked back at Susie, confused and slightly concerned. "What do you mean, Susie?" He asks, "Is this… common?"

Susie huffs. "Uh, yeah! They do it all the time!" Her controller gets set down as she waves her arms around. "Like yesterday, they did it in class! Which I get because Berdley was talking, but still."

Ralsei hums, glancing at them. He seems to contemplate something before speaking. "Um, I've heard of this before I think… Kris, do you have-"

Tenna interrupts with a cough. He looks much more collected now. "I

know you guys are worried for them, but I can assure you they're fine. I've known them for… well, forever!"

He sounds so… happy while saying that.

"Kris is just tired from staying up so late. But we do have remedy's for that!"

Tenna turned to them, grinning. "How about a cuppa joe? Or perhaps you'd prefer tea? We've got lots of great options!"

This feels like he's trying to sell it to you, perhaps not. But you nod anyway despite their thoughts. And surprisingly, he doesn't charge you for it. He just nods and stands up off the couch.

"Alrighty! Cool! Let me get that for you now, buddy 'o pal!" He walks backwards while shooting finger guns at them, luckily not real finger guns. "Don't go anywhere!"

They couldn't even if they wanted to.

You decide to continue playing, and Susie and Ralsei join you, deciding that Kris is fine for now.

The thing was though, they were freaking out inside. How could they fall asleep right then, onto Tenna no less! It was frustrating, annoying, and stupid… that he made them feel so safe!

But being next to Tenna felt like they were five again, sitting next to

their mom or dad, curled up against them like they used to. With clawed fingers running through their hair, gently scratching their scalp.

And playing games too? It pained them to admit but for a moment… they thought Ralsei was their brother. They thought they were back home and just… relaxed.

Fell asleep.

———

Tenna took a while to return, only coming back after they found out Rouxls Kaard, Elnina, and Lanino were now a throuple.

(They had come out on stage once they were almost at lover's peak, someone backstage having guided them out.)

He seemed very apologetic, at least. In his arms were a couple blankets, some pillows, and three lidded cups on a tray.

"I figured it would be rude to leave the others out as well." He explained, handing each of them one of each respectively. "You kids are lucky, this is from my personal stash. Not even my employees get to have this!"

Ralsei beams up at him, clutching his blanket closer. "Wow, thank you Mr. Tenna!"

Susie nods, stealing Ralsei's pillow and making a fort around her. "Yeah, thanks!"

Tenna blushes and looks up, hands clasped behind his back. "Aw, you're welcome, anything for my star contestants! Can't have you getting uncomfortable, I'd be a bad host!"

Then he turned to Kris, smiling expectantly. They were quiet, staring down at the soft red and yellow star covered blanket and plush pillow in their arms. Their eyes traveled down to the cup in their hands. It was warm and smelled like cinnamon and cloves.

"Oh wow!" Ralsei's voice snapped them from their thoughts. He was sipping carefully from his own cup. Steam billowed from his lips as he spoke. "This is amazing!"

Susie shrugged, gulping on hers before burping. "Yeah, it's okay. Not as good as Kris' shampoo though."

While Ralsei scolded Susie for being rude and about drinking inedible things, Kris felt their own cup raise to their lips. It was a warm and creamy coffee that ran smoothly down their throat. It tasted like spiced apples and caramel.

They felt as if it was familiar, reminding them of something that currently slipped from their mind.

It was delicious.

"Do you like it?"

Kris looked up, to see Tenna hovering close to them, watching intently. A small smile was on his screen, but his antennae were drooping down. You nodded to him. It was described as delicious so it must be.

His grin became bright as he clapped his hands together in joy. “YES!” He shouted, before the red returned to his screen along with sweat. “Uh- I mean…” Tenna stuttered, then coughed. “…That’s good. Really good! …Great.”

Tenna sat right back down next to them, patting their knee as he did. “It’s my favorite flavor, the closest I could get to…” he trailed off, smile softening. “It doesn’t matter, just as long as it tastes good right?”

“Hell yeah!” “(Language…) but yes!”

Tenna laughs, relaxing a bit. Then he looks down to his lap, twiddling his thumbs. “Heh, well… how about we skip the Physical Challenge for now?”

Kris can feel your disappointment radiating from them.

The darkener seems to sense it and raises his hands placatingly. “Just for a bit! Trust me, there’s nothing more that I would like right now for you to play, but-“ Something tells Kris that's a lie, “ -how can you play your Best, without a little Rest?”

The way his grin twitches, Kris can tell he’s not saying everything he wants to.

You agree anyway, curiosity peaked, and turn your attention to the now blank screen. After a moment, Tenna slides up next to them. His long legs are crossed and there's a giddy smile on his screen.

"Let's watch a movie in the meantime!" He says, "How about 'All Dogs go to Heaven 2'? It's your favorite!"

Susie snirks, before bursting out laughing. "Dude, seriously? 'All Dogs go to Heaven 2'? Not even the first one? Those are baby movies!"

Kris wishes they could melt away and merge with the couch.

Ralsei tilts his head in confusion, fluffy ears flopping over. "What's wrong with that, Susie? It sounds like a lovely movie!"

"Uh, like I said, no one over the age of five should be watching it!"

"Well, if Kris likes it, you shouldn't make fun of them for it."

"I'm not making fun of them… I'm just pointing out that they need better taste in movies!"

As they argued, Kris sighed internally. It wasn't their favorite movie. At least, not really. They hadn't really watched a movie since the TV was unplugged, which was years ago. And even then, the only movies they watched were whatever VHS tapes or DVD's their parents still had when they were kids. (The night's earlier marathon didn't count, they watched only a minute of it.)

‘All Dogs go to Heaven 2’ was just the best one of them all.

“Now, now,” came Tenna’s cheerful voice from next to them. His grin had fallen a bit, and one antenna was twitching side to side. “Let’s all calm down, folks. There’s no need to start a riot over movie preference, there’s plenty of options to choose from!” He looks over to the side, half whispering to an audience with a smirk. “(I won’t judge what you’re into.)”

Susie and Ralsei stop bickering at his words, with the purple lizard sighing. “Finnnneee… I guess it’s not that bad of a movie.” Ralsei went to thank her but she continued.

“-BUT! We’re watching the first one.” Her arms cross, “Only because Ralsei hasn’t seen it and he’ll get confused.”

“O-oh!” The prince blushes shyly and looks down. “T-thats very nice of you, Susie, but you don’t have to-“

“What a MARVELOUS idea, Susie!” Tenna nearly shouted, positively squirming with excitement. “How thoughtful of you to think of your poor, unknowledgeable friend! To think that little Ralsei has never known the wonders of cinema!”

“Uh, I don’t think-“

The TV lets out a dramatic moan of despair, placing a hand to his head. “OH, it’s a wonder that he’s made it this far, having missed out on something so integral such as this!”

Ralsei begins to sink deeper into the couch, covering his face with his

scarf. “I-is it really that bad?” He asks timidly.

Tenna nods solemnly, his lips twitching up slightly. “DREADFUL, young man!” Then he perks right back up. “But don’t worry your fluffy little head, my star contestant! I can assist you with that!”

He tilts his head up, looking past the ceiling somehow. “Mike! The movie, please!” And in a blink, a VHS tape gets thrown into one of his gloved hands. It’s a bit scratched up and the text has faded, but it’s obvious what it is.

The other hand starts to reach for the seam of his suit, before he stops himself with a blush.

“Oh, uh… Close your eyes kids, and NO PEEKING please!”

Susie groans but just closes the blanket entrance to her pillow fort. Ralsei pulls his scarf over his head with a nod. And Kris…

Kris stares down into their coffee, feeling the heat through their gloves.

The TV’s antennae flick back as he begins to sweat. His grin turns shaky. “…Kris?”

They don’t respond.

They can feel your confusion.

After a moment, the darkener sighs. “Well, I guess it’s okay… if you see it, Kris. But don’t tell anyone!”

A single claw grows out from his glove. This gets Kris’s attention, and yours as well. It slides across the red seam, and hooks onto something. They realize just then that his suit isn’t cloth, but a plastic chassis able to bend like cloth.

He pulls his claw up until there’s a ‘clack!’ and slowly pulls the front of his body away to reveal a bunch of internal wires on where an abdomen should be and a smooth white plastic chest. On his chest are two slots, a VHS and a DVD player.

Tenna seems embarrassed by the whole situation, muttering under his breath about ‘being forced to be vulnerable’ and ‘stupid unprotected wires’ as he slides the tape into him and seals the chassis back up as quickly as he can.

Smoothing down his suit and tie, he glances up at Kris. Quietly, he whispers to them. “I don’t mind too much of you seeing that, not like you weren’t there helping your dad fix me up a couple times, but…” a chuckle escapes him. “Well, this new form comes with a few downsides.”

You nod reluctantly, saying it must suck. Kris… agrees, surprisingly. They’re actually starting to like this guy.

Tenna snorts, smile widening. The barest hints of fangs poke through his lips. “Heh, you got that right. 100 points to your score!” He teases, poking their nose.

They don't mind the zap this time. Strangely, they feel a smile of their own spread over their lips, without your control.

Tenna can barely hold in his excitement at the sight. His antennae curl together until the bulbs touch, forming a heart shape. His screen flickers for just a moment, unable to process the amount of emotions within him. He nearly gasps, getting choked up.

"K-Kris! You finally…!"

A loud groan comes from the end of the couch, stopping Tenna in his tracks. Susie squirms underneath her blanket, impatiently kicking her feet. "Are you done yet, TV guy? You're being all weird and whispery over there…"

His screen turns black at the interruption, but eventually his disappointed face appears once again. He coughs, scooting back from his close position to Kris to sit back on his cushion.

Kris hadn't even noticed how close he'd been. Usually, such proximity would make them feel uncomfortable or in danger…

Tenna laughs awkwardly, "Uh, yeah, I'm done. You all can open your eyes again."

"Finally…" she says, poking her head out. "It was getting stuffy in there." Her eyebrow raises at Ralsei, seeing his face still covered.

"He said he was done, Ralsei… unless you like missing out on movies."

Ralsei jolts, slowly lowering his scarf carefully. “I just wanted to make sure it was okay…”

Susie snorts, stretching out her legs. “‘Course it is. You really need to relax sometimes.”

The couch next to them shifted as Tenna stood up, clapping his hands together. “Well,” he said, walking to the front of the room. “I think you’ve waited long enough! Get comfy, because we are gonna have an amazing movie night, just for you!”

Cheers rang out from their friends, as they all snuggled deeper into their blankets. Ralsei noticed how Kris was still only holding theirs however, and quietly asked if they needed help. Before Kris could shake their head, they felt gentle hands take the blanket from them.

It was Tenna, a soft smile on his screen.

“I got this, I want you to be as comfortable as possible. Only the best for my… original viewer!”

He unfolded it with a flourish, wrapping it around them carefully. After a second of hesitation, he patted them on the head, running his gloved fingers through their hair before pulling away.

Tenna straightened up his suit and put on an award winning smile. “Are you ready?”

“YES!” “Y-yes, Mr. Tenna!”

You nodded.

Tenna nodded back and sat down crisscross applesauce, his antennae shifting forwards. “Then let’s get this party started!” He shouts, before his screen flickers and switches to the movie.

It was funny… Kris was sure they hated this guy but.

Well, he was just… so nice.

It's hard to hate him.

They stared down at the coffee cup in their hands. It has grown cold.

They know now what it reminded them of.

It reminds them of their mother.

Kris looked back up at the Tenna. Hunched over so they all can watch their ‘favorite’ movie series comfortably.

Their chest feels warm.

The cup raises to their lips again, and they sip on the precious liquid.

It tastes like home.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry if this was ooc, or something. I hope you liked this chapter!

Heart to Cathode

Chapter Summary

Tenna and Kris hang out while Susie and Ralsei do their own thing.

Chapter Notes

Hhhh :) it's here!!!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Something around them shifted. Soft and fuzzy material surrounded them.

Distantly, they could make out the sounds of voices familiar to them, but their mind failed to register it.

There were fingers running through their hair. They mumbled, leaning into it. The hand paused.

Another voice. Softer, murmuring to them.

"…back to sleep…"

With a hum of agreement, they pressed themselves against the large figure.

"…mama." They felt themselves whisper, snuggling deeper to 'her' side. Their throat hurt.

The figure stiffened. A buzzing sound they hadn't noticed before grew louder. The other voices quieted.

But they didn't notice, already taken back to the realm of dreams.

———

Shortly after the movie started, Kris fell asleep once more. The sight made Tenna's cords tangle, simultaneously sparking with warmth and disappointment. Once again, he bores them to sleep.

Once again, he isn't enough.

At least Ralsei and Susie lasted through.

Tenna was fond of this movie. While it wasn't Kris' favorite, it was the prequel and that was enough in his book.

It was about two dog monsters and how one had fallen down but came back against the angel's wishes. Then they found a little human girl who understood any language and could communicate with foreign monsters. At the end, she gets adopted by two cat monsters, and the dog monster finally dusts in peace.

(It wasn't his favorite though. His favorite was that one movie, 'Meet the Robinsons.' It just… was a good movie. No other reason.)

Susie didn't seem to like it at first, but at the end she was bawling her eyes out. He was concerned and tried to console her, but Ralsei was

the one who calmed her down. Ralsei seemed to enjoy the movie much more. He came up with theories and guesses about the plot constantly, occasionally having to be shushed by Susie for ‘talking too much.’

Tenna didn’t mind it one bit. He was just happy that Ralsei was having so much fun!

He let the two friends chat for a bit, walking back to his spot on the couch. Carefully, he lowered himself next to the sleeping human.

It’s funny, both Kris and Toriel are finally here, and all they do is sleep.

Without realizing, he finds himself marveling at them once again. It’s just so… impossible to him that they’re here.

With him.

They might look different- cyan with blue hair and covered in armor- but they’re still that little human he once knew.

The one that wore that adorable horned headband while watching cartoons on his screen. Oh, how they would eat their mothers pie so messily, whipped cream covering their smiling lips.

How he wished he was there to rub them clean with his handkerchief… to hold them close as they watched him throughout those sleepless nights, while their mother and father fought upstairs.

To wipe the tears away and make them laugh again.

His hand found Kris' head, gently running through their flowing hair. The shock that came of it seemed to cause them to stir.

Ruby orbs lifted for a second, hazy and unfocused, before their heavy eyelids forced them shut once more.

A smile spread over his screen as they mumbled inaudibly. Their head pushed against his hand.

He found himself chuckling, scratching gently at their scalp. "Go back to sleep, Kris. It's okay."

Kris exhaled softly, pressing their body against him. Then, they whispered…

Huh?!

Tenna's wires sparked and popped within his chassis. His vision went black as he overheated, causing his safety mechanism to reset him.

What?! The HECK!

They thought he was Toriel! Just the thought almost made him reboot again.

Susie and Ralsei stopped their conversation to look at him.

“Uh, you… okay over there man?” The purple monster asked, raising an eyebrow.

Ralsei put a paw to his mouth, shocked. “Are you alright Mr. Tenna? You… shut off for a second there!”

The TV nodded, forcing his antenna to stop vibrating so much. He cleared his throat, attempting to remove the static from his speakers. “Just fine, my dears. It was just a…” He looked away for a second, trying to come up with something convincing.

When nothing came to mind, he felt his hands shake. He placed them on Kris’ back. They covered the human entirely.

“…just a necessary reboot!”

Susie didn’t seem convinced, and although Ralsei wasn’t too knowledgeable on technology, he knew they didn’t reboot for no reason.

The monster huffed, crossing her arms over her chest. “Sure, and I’m a pretty princess.” Her eyes pierced into his screen with a glare. “What’s the real reason?”

Tenna felt his wires pop again and he forced himself to suck in more air through his vents to prevent another shutdown. “It’s nothing you should have to worry yourself about.” His voice shook as he said it, but it was the truth.

His problems aren't theirs to deal with. They were just teenagers, children!

Just because he's insecure doesn't mean he has to project that onto them.

They didn't deserve to hear about another adult's problems.

Susie looked down at the floor, mulling over his words in her mind. Something just wasn't right. He was clearly freaking out but he refused to say why!

That didn't make sense.

Adults were always the first to tell you what you did wrong. To yell at you for touching something you weren't allowed to.

('Except Toriel…' her mind whispered. She pushed the thought aside. 'She's an outlier.')

Obviously he was hiding something.

There was no other explanation.

She stood up abruptly. "Welp, I'm bored." Her bones popped as she stretched, arms above her head. "C'mon Ralsei, let's wake up Kris and go play that racing game."

The prince seemed confused but nodded, reaching over to-

"No!"

Tenna yelled, scooping up the sleeping human into his arms as his antennae flew backwards angrily. For a moment, Ralsei swore he saw fangs. But then the TV came back to himself with an embarrassed blush, and they were gone.

"I mean, uh…" he stammered, laughing nervously. "W… why not… let them sleep!" A gloved hand gingerly patted Kris' head. "They're so so SO tired, it would be cruel to wake them now!"

Ralsei frowned. Tenna was acting very contradictory. At first, Kris fell asleep and he wanted them to wake up. But now when Kris is asleep, he wants them to stay sleeping?

Susie let out a frustrated groan, stomping her foot. "Ffffine! We'll just do this without Kris." Grabbing Ralsei's arm, she stormed off.

Tenna sighed, looking down at the bundled up human in his arms. A pang of guilt and shame runs through his cords. He was just enjoying holdin-

The monster peeked back in, causing the darkener to jump.

She gave him a look, scrutinizing every inch of him. The feeling of her eyes on him made him shudder.

“You better let them sleep and not do anything weird.”

…Okay, that was just offensive!

“I would never-!” He started to argue, but she was already gone.

That was just rude. He would never do anything to hurt Kris. Muttering under his breath, he paced the room, bouncing the human in his hold.

“What am I doing wrong? It was going so well, and now Susie is getting upset at me.” Shifting Kris over to one arm, Tenna uses the other to fidget with his tie. “Did I not provide enough snacks? Drinks? I don’t have any more pie crumbs to add to the TV dinners. Maybe they wanted the ice cream instead? Ohhh, I should’ve-“

A quiet groan stopped him in his tracks. Red eyes met his screen in a silent staring contest. This went on for several seconds, as TV and human stared at each other quietly.

The moment was ruined by a cough. Tenna frowned, glass sweat beading down his face.

Raising a hand, he felt their forehead and gasped at the heat radiating off of them. “Oh no…” he said, gently brushing their hair from their face. “It’s gonna be okay, budd- …Kris. Let’s go get some medicine for you, okay?”

“Tenna…” they rasped. The TV shushed them, already walking off stage.

“I think there’s some in my office.”

——

“Alright,” said Susie as she and Ralsei walked to the green room. “Something fishy is going on, and we’re gonna find out what!”

Ralsei looked behind him at the stage door worriedly. “Are you sure about this, Susie? Tenna’s been nothing but nice since we got here, (Even if he does have his moments…)”

The monster rolls her eyes. “Pff… and that's just the thing! No one is that nice, not unless they want something from you or are trying to hide something.” Her frown deepened. “…He’s really weird about Kris, but hopefully that’ll keep him distracted enough to not realize we’re snooping.”

The prince bit his lips. “…I noticed that, too.” A look of determination crosses his face. “Ok! Let’s do it!” He nods.

Susie chuckles, cracking her knuckles against her palms. “Then let’s do some breaking and entering!”

“Haha! …what?”

They pushed open the green room doors, not noticing the red soul following behind them.

———

“Well, here it is!”

Tenna exclaimed as he walked into a small room. He had to shrink down to fit, but he was still bigger than most adults.

“Make yourself comfortable.”

The office was messy but charming. It had a nice desk and a large swirly chair with red cushions. That’s where Tenna sat Kris down as he rummaged through a drawer, humming softly.

They took this moment to keep looking around, relaxing back into the softness surrounding them.

There was a recently used coffee machine, the pot still half full. A box of spiced apple flavored coffee pods sat next to it, along with a jar of caramel sauce.

Pens and papers covered the desk, random legal stuff that should probably be filed away but weren’t. There was a lone outlet on the wall, but it wasn’t being used. And…

Underneath the desk, there is a blanket and a pillow shoved haphazardly under to make space.

“Alrighty… this should be it.” The darkener pulls out a bottle, reading the label carefully. Nodding in approval, he approaches Kris as he

removes the cap.

“I'm not exactly a weatherman, but one sip of this, and you’ll be right as rain!” A bright smile stretched across his screen.

Kris watched as he held out the cap, full of a purple liquid. It smelled like artificial grapes.

They slowly took it from Tenna’s gloved hands, chugging it down in a swift gulp. Their face scrunched up at the taste. Sticking out their tongue in disgust, they saw it was now colored from the cheap dye.

Tenna couldn’t help but laugh at the sight, speakers crackling with glee. Seeing the irritation on the human’s face, he attempted to stifle his snickers.

“Sorry, sorry…” he laughed, pressing a hand to his screen. “You just looked so cu- uh, hilarious!” He stammers. Awkwardly, he walks over to the coffee pot, pouring it into a disposable cup.

He passed it to them and made another. “To wash that awful taste out.” He explains, “…and because I’ve been craving some.”

Tenna lifts the cup up to the air. “Bone apple teeth!” Pressing it to his screen, he tilts the cup back. Coffee pours down his glass onto his suit, as his body seizes while the liquid fries his systems.

Kris watches him drink for a few seconds- concern written all over their face, -before drinking theirs.

Sparks fly off Tenna's screen as he sighs, black smoke pouring out of his vents. He leans back onto the wall, somehow relaxed after electrocuting himself. "Ahh… that hit the spot. Really brings the energy back into you!"

"…Tenna." They whisper quietly, fingers tapping along the cup.

The TV perks up, antenna buzzing. A look of surprise crosses his screen. Rubbing the coffee off with a sleeve, he tilts his head. "Hey, what's up buttercup? Coffee's not sweet enough, or maybe you're hungry…? Want me to fetch you a-"

Kris shakes their head, cutting him off. They open their mouth before closing it again.

Frustrated, they frown.

You left and they still can't find the words to speak. They have so much they want to say and yet none come forth.

"I- I'm sorry, Kris."

They look up at Tenna. He's wringing his hands together, avoiding their gaze.

He takes a deep breath before continuing. "I just… I'm trying as best I can to make this as fun as possible but you're not having fun and you're sick and I don't know what to do anymore!" His screen flickers and he starts to pull on his antenna. "Argh… I just want you to be happy and I can't even do that!"

Kris stares on in shock as the TV mutters to himself in frustration, pacing around the room.

"…and Susie doesn't like me anymore and nothing's going to plan and- and-!"

"It's okay…" Their raspy voice mumbles as they slide off the chair. They limp to him, stumbling over their own shaky feet. Tenna looks like he wants to reach out to steady them but stops himself.

Standing in front of the large darkener, Kris slowly reaches out and wraps their arms around his leg. They press their face against it, feeling the electricity buzzing within him transfer into them.

"I don't think you're boring."

Tenna stammers, his wires slowly heating up again. His screen flashes pink before turning black as he short circuits, falling to the floor.

"Tenna!" The human stumbles back in shock.

As Kris attempts to shake him back awake, his antennae curl back into that heart shape, lighting arching between them.

———

Tenna and Kris sat across from each other, legs crossed. They both had

gotten more comfortable, Kris having grabbed the blanket again and Tenna having changed outfits to a white button up.

Tenna had a hand to his screen, rubbing it in thought.

“So…” He begins slowly, an antenna flicking. “You’re telling me you’ve been possessed by an entity-“

“My soul.”

The TV’s lips tighten. “…Your soul. Right. And it’s been controlling you this whole time.”

Kris nods, rubbing their arms. “Most of the time.” They correct.

Tenna’s quiet for a moment, looking down at his lap. A small frown is on his face, which gets bigger every second. He speaks softly.

“So, you didn’t get to have any fun while you were here…” His voice is shaky, shrouded in static. A glass tear builds up where his eyes would be. He rubs at it harshly.

Kris waved their arms about, shaking their head. “No, no, I did! It just… it was like watching a movie!”

Tenna sniffles, chuckling disbelievingly. “Of course.” He sighs, letting his hand fall. “You don’t have to try and make me feel better, buttercup. You’ve dealt with enough adult’s problems.” A frown.

“I don’t want to add to that long list.”

The human pulled the blanket around them tighter, retreating into the soft fabric like a turtle. “…” They swallowed the growing lump in their throat. “I… I don’t want it to come back.”

Tenna’s screen flickers, antenna drooping forward. “Oh, honeypie…”

A gloved hand rubs their shoulder soothingly, and they start to hiccup as all the emotions they’ve been holding back come forth. A sob rips from their throat as they cry, tears running down their cheeks.

The darkener wipes them away gently with a thumb. A shaky smile spreads across his face as a thought occurs to him.

“Hey…” The TV slowly stands up, reaching out a hand. “Let’s get some me-shaped ice cream. I’ll even let you have mine, buttercup.”

Kris sniffles, and slowly reaches up, about to take his hand when…

Fwoosh!

A ball of fire shoots between them. Tenna barely dodges, the tip of his tie charring.

“Get away from my child.”

Chapter End Notes

Cliff hanger yay!!!
Yeah, that “for a short bit” in the tags? I LIED!!!!!

I’ve already started the next chapter so it’ll be here soon… :)

Anyway, another believer is Tenna-coded, he definitely loves Meet the Robinsons because he wants that for himself so bad. Big family that loves him. Ok crazed ramble over, thanks for reading, please leave comments they fuel me, ok thanks bye!!!

edit: i was bored so i drew a couple doodles of one of my favorite moments in this chapter. i hope you like it lol.

EDIT 2: other link broke, here’s another one.
https://www.tumblr.com/sweetnsourstufff/787282084284841984/i-forgot-i-should-post-this-here-as-well-lol

Heating up

Chapter Summary

> Confrontation and misunderstandings.

Chapter Notes

> Woof, this chapter really fought me guys. I know I said it would come out soon but I jinxed myself real bad TT_TT
>
> Anyways, it's here and I couldn't get my beta readers again this time so hopefully it's not too ooc or anything.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"Get away from my child."

The air entering his vents was hot and smelled of burnt plastic and charcoal. It was his plastic that was melting. His tie, charred and black at the tip.

His gloved hands shook as he slowly turned his head to the door, seeing…

Her.

Toriel.

Her royal regalia flowed around her with magic, more flames spawning nearby. Behind her, both Susie and Ralsei stood, grave expressions on their faces.

Tenna took a step back nervously, feeling his antennae pin back.

She was so mad at him.

‘This is bad, this is really, REALLY bad!’

Her eyes felt as though they pierced through his cathode tube.

“T-Tori? W-what are you-?”

Her glare cut him off.

“I said,” she stepped closer, flames brightening. “Get away from them.”

“Yeah!” Susie chimes in, following closely behind. “We know your evil plan now!”

Ralsei lowers his head, looking hurt. “I… I trusted you, Tenna.”

The TV glanced around at all of them, speakers filled with static. Toriel looked at him with hatred, Susie glared angrily, Ralsei was betrayed, and…

Kris was in shock, and slightly panicked. Their hands gripped the blanket tightly, knuckles turning pale as more tears leaked down their face.

Tenna could empathize.

He would love to do the same.

“Now, now,” He attempted to soothe, “Let’s all calm down, foOOOOLLLKS!” He screeched as Susie swung at him, barely missing him.

“No more sweet talk!” She growls, swiping at him again. “Give us back Kris!”

He raised up his hands, looking back and forth between the two monsters. Glass sweat beaded on his screen. “Listen, you don’t understand! Toriel can’t-!“

“Can’t be awake?” Susie finishes, sneering. “She needs to be asleep so you can use her for… for something evil?!” She points a clawed finger accusingly at him.

“Well, too bad! She’s awake and aware of who you really are!”

Tenna feels insane.

This is crazy!

He laughs incredulously and pulls at his antennae. “WHAT??? Are you talking about????” He’s trying so hard not to scream or cry.

“I’m not- this isn’t- Hhhh…” He wheezes out, screen turning black.

Toriel took another step forward, flames dancing across her palms. The TV backed away, bumping into the small table holding the coffee machine. The pot tumbles to the ground, spilling the brown liquid all over the floor.

She’s so mad at him…

The monster growled lowly at him, huffing smoke through her nostrils. Another fireball shot out, hitting his shoulder. Hissing, he quickly patted it away, shaking profusely.

“Tori, please…” He begged, tears building on his screen. (Please stop looking at him like that, like he’s trash, garbage, good-for-nothing-)

“You do not get to call me that name.” Her words pierced through him like spears of hate. His antenna twitched and flattened. “You dare kidnap and hurt my child, and have the gall to act like we’re friends?”

Hurt Kris?

They think he hurt them?

His face falls as he realizes that they all really believe he would hurt Kris.

Speaking of… he gaze travels to the lump of fabric where Kris USED to be.

Where..?

A small sniffle draws his attention to his desk.

Oh.

They were huddled beneath it, hiding away from the fighting. Just like they used to.

No.

He’s not going to let his emotions get the best of him again.

Kris needs him.

Tenna sighs, before taking a deep breath and gathering his courage. “L-listen to me.” His hands clasp together to stop their shaking. “We are all in so much danger right now. We can argue about this later, but for right now?” He points directly at Toriel.

“You have to go back to sleep.”

Susie snorts and steps forward, ready to start pounding on this guy, but Ralsei’s voice stops her.

“Why?”

Tenna jolts. “What?”

The prince looks up at him, determination all over his face. “Why does she have to sleep?”

The TV looks away, guilt eating at him. “B-because…”

He exhales shakily. “The knight wants her.”

The two heroes stiffen, and Toriel looks confused. Distantly, he registers the soft sounds of crying stopping.

“THE KNIGHT?!” “T-the knight?!” “The knight..?”

Susie shakes her head, pointing her axe at his chest. “You’re working for the knight? What do they want with Toriel?!” She tries to sound brave, but inside, she’s shaken.

Why Toriel?

What could they possibly want Kris’ mom for?

“I- …I don’t know.” Tenna admits quietly.

Shame runs through his cords. It pains him to admit it, but he was so desperate for anything, that of course he agreed to give up Toriel to be

watched again. He told himself that he wouldn't need her because he would have everyone else watching him, but…

He's not so sure anymore.

Tonight was fun, but he's starting to realize… he doesn't need everyone to watch him. To have fun with him. It certainly helps his ego but…

He thinks back to how Kris hugged him, admitted to him that he wasn't boring, even while being possessed for most of the time they were with him.

He remembers back to when they would shut him off at nights, and how content he was at having done his job. He entertained them, and now they were happy and he was happy and it was time to rest.

Those feelings had only changed after he met… Spamton.

Spamton was a small thing with big plans and even bigger dreams. He told Tenna how much more he could have, should have! About giant cheering crowds full of smiles and laughter.

Those nights of contentment turned to disappointment, fear, frustration.

He wanted more. Kris and Asriel weren't enough anymore.

And then they shut him off for good.

For years, those feelings stewed and pent up. He blamed people, cried for days, and even broke a few things in a tantrum.

He was desperate and Spamton promised to help him. But he, too, left and Tenna was all alone once again.

So when the knight appeared and offered him freedom, a chance to be loved again…

He took it.

“I… I don’t know what they want with her, but they’re coming for her, very soon.” Tenna states, leaning away as far as he can from Susie’s axe.

Susie scoffs, lowering her weapon nervously. “So what does that mean for us?”

“It means…” Ralsei steps forward, getting (almost) everyone’s attention. “That they’re going to be hunting her, and they’re not going to stop until they get her.”

Toriel’s flames sputtered, flickering down into tiny lights. She tilts her head, crown almost slipping off. “Who is this “Knight” we are talking about?” A frown crosses her lips. “They do not sound very friendly.”

Ralsei looks down, adjusting his glasses with a blush. “R-right, you… don’t know what we’re talking about.”

“They’re some evil asshole that keeps making dark fountains to try and end the world!” Susie says, growling. “Ugh, just thinking about them makes me mad! I don’t even know who they are or what they look like, but I can just imagine how much of a jerk they are!”

She turns to Tenna glaring. “Kinda like you.”

He scoffs incredulously, raising his hands to the air. “This again?!”

He crosses his arms and shakes his head, offended and hurt. His antennae bend out of irritation. “I’m telling you, I wouldn’t hurt Kris! I love them!”

“Yeah, right! If you’re such a saint, why’d you kidnap them and make them cry?!”

“Uh, they were sick and needed medicine, plus it’s none of your business why they were crying!”

“Uh, yeah it is! They’re our friend and we deserve to know if they’re hurt or upset.”

Tenna snarls, baring his fangs and digging his growing claws into his fists. “You didn’t even notice that they were POSSESSED!”

The air stills. Tenna realizes what he said too late, slapping a hand to his screen.

They all look at him in shock and horror.

"…what?" Susie whispers.

Suddenly, the sound of running came from behind them. They all turn to see Kris running out of the room, hands covering their face as they cry.

" "Kris!" " "Buttercup!" "My child!"

Tenna goes to run after the sad human, only to be stopped by a wall of fire blocking the doorway.

"What the-" He turns to see Toriel with her arm raised. She glares at him harshly.

"You." She starts, walking closer. "You will be staying here."

He sputters, a flush rising to his cheeks in frustration and hurt. "Wh-but they need me!" His hands touch his chest as he tilts his head, brows furrowed.

Toriel lets out a harsh laugh. "Ha! They need you?" She waves him off dismissively. He feels a pang of hurt in his cords. "I'm their mother. I'm sure I can do a better job than some stranger."

Tenna looks down, feeling his screen sting. His face turns black for a second.

“Then why didn’t they tell you..?”

Toriel pauses, looking confused. “What?”

He continues, wringing his hands together. “Why didn’t they tell you they were possessed?”

“Well… because…”

Tenna shakes his head. “They don’t trust you.”

He thinks back to all the times he saw Kris get dismissed by their mother, for having an ‘active imagination.’ For being a ‘troublemaker’ and a ‘prankster.’

Sure, Toriel was a good mom but… she wasn’t perfect. And to a teenager like Kris? That warranted hiding things from her.

Important things.

He looked her in the eyes- as much as he could without breaking down in tears, -and confidently said, “I get it, you don’t know or l-like me but… they trust me. Kris needs me right now more than they need you.”

Toriel was shocked and hurt by his words but… they were true. Kris had stopped telling her things a long time ago. She figured it was just

puberty. But she should have realized it was because their relationship had broken down. She felt awful.

Right then, she made a promise to herself to be better. To listen and be there for her child again. She slowly lowered her flames.

“Fine.” She said with a look of mutual understanding. “But if you hurt a single hair on their head, I will make you acquaintances with the fire pit…” She glared.

The TV nodded, relief bursting in his cathode tube. She doesn’t hate him! Toriel doesn’t hate him! …she dislikes him, but it wasn’t hate!

He turned and ran out the door to hide his growing smile, quickly replaced with worry for Kris.

“Watch the babies for me!”

Ralsei blinked. “Did he just-“

———

Kris wasn’t sure where they were going.

They ran through the maze like corridors and runways until they collapsed. It felt like they couldn’t breathe, like they were suffocating under the weight of their emotions.

They ended up in some back hallway, meant for staff only. Curling up tighter, they pushed themselves against the wall, their head hitting a poster of Tenna smiling behind them.

They stared at the happy face for a while, letting their tears drip down their chin slowly.

They felt a presence next to them and heard a slight twinkling sound as someone sat next to them.

It was a Pippin. This one was green, however. It had a tray of TV Slop, and was holding out the ice cream that came with it.

“Here kid, you need it more than me.”

Slowly, they reached out and grasped it. It looked like Tenna. Sniffling, they licked it carefully. Tastes like static and blueberries.

The green pippin shoved something blue into their mouth, chewing with their mouth open.

“So,” They asked, voice muffled. “What’s your deal?”

Kris didn’t answer, looking forward again and continuing to slowly lick the now dripping ice cream.

The dice wasn’t too bothered by this, shrugging before shoveling more food into their mouth. “Eh, whatever. Don’t gotta tell me nothing if you don’t want to.”

They sat in silence for a couple minutes, until the ice cream began to fall onto the flooring.

“Boss won’t be too happy about that, y’know?” They said, pointing to how the gray cream was seeping into the carpet. “It’s cheap food dye, so it’s gonna stain if you don’t eat that quick.”

“…”

“…or let it stain. What do I care?”

The green pippin pushed their empty tray to the side. “Y’know, this ain’t the worst conversation I ever had. I didn’t know what the shadow guys were saying for ages!” He waves his arms around. “I got stuck in a thirty minute conversation with one of them once, and I didn’t understand a word!”

Kris sniffed and wiped their face awkwardly with their hands, trying not to drop their treat. It wobbled precariously but somehow stayed upright.

“…Yeah,” The pippin sighed, slowly standing back up. They looked down at the human, a soft expression passing over their face. “It’s gonna be alright, Kris. You always were a tough kid.” Then it began to hop away, leaving its garbage.

“Anyway, I gotta go. Boss is calling me. Says it’s urgent.” They laugh. “Probably just spilled coffee all over himself again. Happens every time!”

And Kris was alone again.

Or so they thought.

———

Tenna tapped his foot impatiently, waiting for Mike to arrive. He'd already told all his other employees to be on the lookout for Kris, but it was taking a long time. He had to take a break, so he was on the stage.

This dark world was like a maze, and was way bigger than any of the previous ones. They could get lost so easily, and never find their way back…

Oh, angel, what if they ran out of his domain and into the purple cliffs?!

What if they got lost and starved to death, or died from boredom!

What if they were all cold and alone and sad and-

"Boss? Boss!"

A small hand shook his pant leg.

"It's ok, boss, just breathe!"

His vents greedily suck in air once more. He didn't realize when he'd stopped.

Tenna looked down to see Mike, the small microphone looking worried. He took a step back, and Mike let go of his pants easily.

"There you are!" He said, fidgeting with his tie. He stuck his tongue out at the feeling of its melted surface, letting go of it in disgust. "I need you to help look for Kris. I… I really trust you, and I need you to try your best!"

He continued on, not noticing the surprise expression and sweat dripping down Mike's face. Nor did he notice the other Mike's arriving, staying just out of sight.

"If we split up, I can take one side, and you can take the other!" He laughs, wheezing as his hands twitch to do something. "It'll be just like that cartoon Kris loved to watch! Where they avoid the monster and run through doors and stuff!"

Tenna chuckles, tugging on an antenna. "Oh right, I forgot to tell you!" Looking back down at the small Mike, he smiled.

"If you see a floating soul anywhere…" The smile widened, wobbling.

"Capture it!" He said cheerfully, static filling his speakers. "I want to see it myself! Have a little *chat*!"

Small Mike nods slowly, worried for his boss. It looks like he's not in

the best mood at the moment.

Tenna claps his hands together gleefully. His screen flickers every so often, his smile just a tad too sharp for comfort. “Great! Now that everyone’s on board…”

Raising a finger towards the sky, he runs off.

“Let’s split up, gang!”

As he runs off, all the Mikes group up behind him, watching him go. They look at each other with concern before breaking apart into opposite directions.

———

Tenna really wasn’t sure where he was going, or even doing at this point. He knew he needed to find Kris, but it all felt so hopeless.

He honestly just wanted to sit down and curl up into a ball and silently freak out. Maybe cry.

A *lot* of crying, actually.

This night has been so hectic and stressful and exhausting.

But it’s also been the most fun he’s had in years, the best he’s ever felt in his life!

It’s confusing.

He rounds another corner, poking his head around and then sighing at- once again, -seeing nothing. His hands reached for his tie again, stopping just short of actually doing anything as he remembered how Toriel kinda ruined it.

Toriel…

She really thought he would hurt Kris. Hurt their family.

He could never.

He would never.

But she wouldn’t know that…

She doesn’t know him.

Even though he’s been with them for years, loved them for years…

He’s still a stranger to her.

And doesn’t that sting? A crushing sensation felt deep within his cords at the thought.

He turns around the next corner, and sighs at the sight of an empty tray on the ground. Must've been one of the pippins. They never throw away their trash.

It's really dented for some reason.

He bends down to pick it up, already mentally remembering where the nearest trash can is when…

A hand tugs at his pant leg. A familiar one.

"Kris?" Tenna turns, dropping the tray with a clatter.

Kris stands there, expressionless but with puffy eyes. Their hand grips him tightly, as if afraid to let go.

Tenna lets out a gasp of relief, quickly lifting them up by their arms. He holds them out like a cat, tearing up. "Oh, buttercup, there you are!"

They stare at him quietly.

An idea hits him.

He adjusts his grip, slowly, carefully hugging them. It's awkward and Kris is stiff in his arms, but it's so nice. Who knew that giving hugs was just as good as getting them! The TV leans into it, shoving his

screen into their neck.

Ha, smells like apples.

“Please, never do that again.” He sniffs, pressing his ‘cheek’ against theirs. “I’m sorry I told them, I didn’t mean to.” He pulls his face away, looking into their eyes. “A-and I’ll make sure to never get angry or mad, or or-“

Tenna cuts himself off, staring at the human. Something’s wrong. They aren’t… responding.

They were always a quiet kid but.

Oh.

Oh no.

The soul.

A chuckle ripped from his speakers. And another. Until he was laughing hysterically, hunching in on himself. Even still, he never dropped them. Never let them go.

“I- I can’t believe it, that I could be so…” His lips wobbled. “Of course, I can’t even do this right.” Something wet drips down onto their cheek, liquid glass running down his screen. The laughter slowly stops.

“I told myself that you wouldn’t go through t-this again,” he whispers. Walking over to the wall, he slowly slides down it, gently shifting Kris in his arms. They don’t respond, not even looking at him. His screen flickers.

“I told myself I wouldn’t let you down, that I’ll fix everything and it’ll all be better.” He looks down, softly brushing their hair out of their face with his fingers.

“But I failed you again.”

Kris tilted their head, and you ask him what’s wrong. Tenna stares at them for a minute, before wiping his tears away.

(He wants to scream at you, rip you to shreds, make you his new favorite stress ball. He wants to hold them close and sob, to tell them it’s gonna be okay, to somehow make it better.)

Instead, he plasters a smile on his screen, rubbing a hand on their head.

“…It’s nothing, buttercup. Let’s go back to the others.”

———

Everything was fuzzy.

They felt big arms around them, bouncing up and down as they were carried off somewhere.

They didn't want to know.

Further, they retreated.

They remembered fighting.

They didn't want it to happen again.

But they got tired and…

…

Void encompassed them.

Light is behind them, yet they avoid it.

Avoid the truth.

They don't want to wake up and see reality.

So they stay back, and drift further off.

Not like they have a choice either way.

———

When Tenna returns, Toriel perks up.

Ignoring the TV, she beelines straight to her child.

“Oh Kris!” She says, gently taking them from him. She squeezes them so tightly, pressing a kiss to their cheek. Pulling away, she smiles at them. “I’m so sorry, sweetie. I should’ve realized but…”

She looks away, a complicated emotion on her face.

“Well, all that matters is you’re alright.” She pinches their cheek, giggling.

Susie and Ralsei come over next, worried for their friend. But seeing that they're okay, they hug Kris with all their might.

“We’re sorry, Kris!” Susie says, looking ashamed.

“I should’ve paid better attention!” Cries Ralsei.

Kris takes this all with a blank face, nodding at times. You have no idea what is going on, but are happy to get hugs from all your friends.

Tenna watches this all happen, antennae drooping. He contemplates saying something but…

No.

That'll only distract them.

He'll find a way to fix this alone.

Right now, they need to focus on…

On sealing the dark fountain.

His hands shake at the thought.

He'll be alone again, but it's worth it for his family. He can't let Toriel get taken.

…

She'll definitely throw him away after this.

…That's Fine! He's sure he can find a way to come back! Before he gets turned to scrap metal…

Oh, Angel, he's screwed!

He’s gonna die, isn’t he?

He’s gonna get turned into a metal sculpture by some hippie, and then get crushed by a giant robot!

Oh, wait, that's a movie plot…

Whatever it’s close enough!

Tenna takes a deep breath in through his vents and exhales harshly, clapping his hands together.

“Alrighty, now that we’ve all apologized and poured our hearts out, let’s get going!”

Everyone stops and stares at him, watching him sweat and seeing *every single tiny flaw in his character!*

“Uh,” Susie blinks, “Why would we go anywhere with you?”

Ralsei tilts his head, glasses slipping down his snout. “Where do you want us to go?”

Toriel frowns, placing a hand on Kris’ shoulder.

Tenna grins widely, screen stretching as much as it can. He ignores

the rising panic in his circuits. No time to dwell on his impending doom! No siree!

“The dark fountain! So you can all go home and nothing bad will happen what-so-ever!”

He spreads his arms out, as if advertising the fountain. “And then you can watch movies on me and forget about the knight and just have fun!” His screen flickers. A bead of sweat forms.

“…with me. You can have fun with me.”

Susie’s lips tighten, frowning. “H-ooooh ‘Kay then…” She turns to Toriel, whispering, “Uh, you aren’t actually gonna keep this guy, are you?”

Toriel shrugs, gently petting Kris’ head. She’s not sure how to even feel about her TV being alive and possibly evil. She was planning on just getting rid of the old thing but…

She glanced up at the CRT, watching him slowly wring his gloved hands together.

…it feels wrong now, knowing he’s a person.

(Which makes her feel even more weird knowing that means a lot of her house is also alive. Is her car alive too? Is it in pain from the slashed tires?)

Seeing this strange, pathetic man struggle to be somewhat normal is… almost charming, in a way.

She decides then and there, perhaps she shall keep him. She always did like the cooking channel.

“I think,” Toriel starts, turning back to the young monster. A small smile crosses her face. “It’ll be nice to cook TV recipes again.”

Susie huffs, crossing her arms over each other.

Personally, she wouldn’t want the guy that kidnapped her around but, to each their own, she guesses!

(She looks over at Tenna, thoughts running through her mind at near lightning speed. Her expression softens just a tad. She’s reminded of how he looked when they talked, one on one. How lonely and sad he seemed. Like… like she was.)

(Maybe he isn’t such a bad guy.)

Ralsei sighs. He adjusts his glasses, a small frown forming upon his face. “Well, I guess let’s head over there then.” He looks off to the side.

“We should hurry before the knight comes.”

Tenna jolts in place, knocked out of his silent stupor.

“Y-yes!” He nods, already heading for the door. The darkener opens it, waving his arm towards the exit. “Let’s go! It would be terrible if something happened to you guys!”

The heroes piled out of the room, barely sparing a glance back as they left.

Tenna slowly closed the door behind him with a click. He stood there, watching everyone walk ahead of him.

Kris led the way, walking in that robotic way they had since the beginning. He felt his antennae bend as he tried to remember how they used to move.

He couldn’t.

All his knowledge felt insignificant in the face of the fact that he didn’t know something as simple as this.

Ralsei seemed to finally notice the TV wasn't with them. He turned around, giving the darkener a quizzical look.

Tenna gave the prince a shaky smile, striding over on his long legs.

Each step felt like walking closer to the execution chamber.

‘*It’s gonna be fine,*’ the TV thinks to himself with a shaky smile,

stepping in line with everyone else.

‘Nothing bad will happen.’

Chapter End Notes

So close to the end… 2 more.

Edit: GUYS CHECK OUT THIS FANART ITS SO AWESOME AND COOL.

https://www.tumblr.com/mangosundae/787023752150024192/holds-them-like-babie-drew-some-fanart-for

https://www.tumblr.com/mangosundae/788179140245340160/hiiiii-sweetnsourstufff-i-drew-some-more-fanart

They’re made by the lovely Mangosundae, check them out and FOLLOW THEM, I swear I will find you and bite your ankles if you don’t, ok?

Fountain

Chapter Summary

The fountain awaits.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Fog puffed up around their mouth as they moved through the thick coating of snow on the ground.

There were tracks from before they came, some fresher than others, snow just starting to smooth them over again. Some were large and hasty, snow flung forward with each quick step. Others were smaller, two pairs of people walking side by side carefully.

Snow crunched beneath their feet as you moved forward, more steps landing directly behind them, replacing their footprints with their own.

“Just a little further…” Tenna’s staticky voice called out. Through the biting wind, you can hear the crackling of static ahead, snow melting and dripping into Tenna’s sensitive speakers.

You swiveled your head, nodding.

Earlier, you had followed Susie and Ralsei on their adventure. You were there when they unlocked the doors and entered this chilly place. You saw them find Toriel, as Susie chopped the gachapon open frantically with her axe and freed her.

You saw them shake her awake, her confusion, her bewilderment, her

worry, her rage. They had all concluded that Tenna was going to use her somehow, and rushed back over to the stage, passing panicked pippins and shadow guys.

But when they returned, he and Kris were gone. Replaced by the purple socket-like guy, carefully cleaning the mess left behind. You liked their accent, calling the heroes ‘luv’ and how ‘Tenna’s gonna be right miffed ‘bout that’ when he noticed Toriel staring in wonder at her surroundings.

That's when they really got angry, demanding to know where Kris was. The socket just laughed, saying he had no clue where they’d gotten off to.

The others left in a hurry, running off to search the halls. You stayed behind, opting to look on your own.

It took a bit, but you found Kris. They sat on the ground, and as soon as they knew you were around, they shot up. They grabbed a plastic food tray next to them, hitting you anytime you got close.

But soon, they grew tired. Their hits were weaker, until they eventually stopped. It was easy to settle back into your place then, snug within their chest. Their body ached and felt sluggish, though, so you were forced to rest.

And then Tenna came and they decided to see what was up with him.

Now, you are here. In the cold snow with all their friends. Your friends, too!

They finally arrive at the fountain. The gushing pillar of darkness they need to seal. Ralsei stayed behind, already having said his goodbyes.

“Alright,” Susie calls out, teeth chattering as she tries to rub the cold away. “Kris, do your thing.”

You felt yourself start to glow hot, burning bright as you slowly slipped out into the open. Approaching the fountain, its cold warmth encases you as you begin to burn away the darkness.

The room slowly gets brighter and brighter-

Until something snaps around you.

You hear a startled gasp behind you. Spinning around you see Susie looking pissed, Toriel looking furious, and Tenna…

The fanged grin on his face scares you.

This is not the silly man you’ve grown to know. That is the face of a desperate person ready to do anything to get what he wants.

The TV slowly steps out of the line behind Kris, as Susie and Toriel back up unconsciously, moving into fight positions.

His gloved hands grasp the plastic ball with barely held back restraint, claws digging into it hard enough to leave scratches.

Despite having no eyes, you can feel him looking directly at you. Your skin would crawl if you had any at the moment.

“Caught you…” He says in a sing-song tone of voice. His grin widens.

Susie growls. “HEY!” She stomps her foot, causing Tenna’s head to snap back towards her, his antennae twitching. “What the HELL are you doing?!”

The purple lizard throws her hands up in irritation, groaning loudly. “I KNEW we couldn’t trust you! But I just HAD to get my hopes up.” Pulling out her axe, she readies herself for battle.

Toriel glowers at him, flames spawning around her immediately. “To think, I would’ve kept you…”

Tenna flinches back, smile wobbling. His claws dig in even deeper, puncturing the soft plastic prison.

“D… don’t say that!” He chuckles, looking away. The darkness reflects onto his screen, shifting rainbows and pulsing shadows obscuring his expression.

“There’s no need to fight…” He says, tilting his head down. “I’m going to fix this.” His brows furrow even as his grin steadies. “Kris will finally be happy again.”

Sweat drips down the side of Susie’s face, her grip tightening on her axe. Toriel takes in a deep breath, fire flaring up even hotter.

“…and then everything will go back to normal!” Static builds up in his speakers. “We can all forget this ever happened!”

“Just…” he pauses, turning back to the small lightners in front of him. Electricity crackles between his antennae.

“…as soon as I vaporize this *thing*.”

———

They came back to themselves in bursts.

Lava burned throughout their veins every time they were forced back to awareness.

Each time left them gasping for breath as their skin sizzled, the smell of burnt hair filling the air.

Once again, their body seems to get doused into liquid fire. Opening their eyes, Kris is greeted by a sight that almost hurts worse than the magma under their skin.

Tenna stands in front of the fountain, blocking it with his giant form as he attacks… you. The soul.

Strangely, you are encased within a red and white bubble(?) and are the sole focus of many lightning and star attacks. Susie and Toriel are unharmed.

It’s just you.

Why is he hurting them? Is he mad that they ran away?

…that they got possessed again?

“C’mon!” Tenna pants out, summoning more bolts of lighting to zap out at you. Beads of glass sweat drip down his face, shattering on the ground and fading away. “This is the only way! Just let me help you!”

You take another hit, and Kris falls down onto their knees. Tenna isn’t holding back.

“Kris!” Susie calls out, running over. Their ears are ringing, her voice muffled and fading in and out. “Here… …this, it’ll… …you.”

They blink up at her, swaying side to side. Kris finally notices her hand stuck out to them. In it is a soda. The can is slightly crushed and it’s already open, but it’ll do.

Taking a sip and grimacing at the taste of backwash, they finally get back onto their feet and into a fighting stance. They don’t know why Tenna is hurting them, (and the thought makes them want to cry again,) but they won’t go down without a fight!

Susie returns to her place next to Toriel, and it's then that they realize just how exhausted everyone looks.

Toriel has soot all over her face as she wipes at her forehead with blackened paws. Susie's axe drags on the ground, shakily raised with weak attack. Tenna seems to be struggling, his screen taken on a reddish hue as steam billows from his vents. At some point his tie had come off, laying undone on the ground.

Even Kris felt tired. Their muscles ached like they ran 100 miles. Their gloves were soaked and slipping, making it harder to grip their sword.

Still, they tried their best to join the fight, watching as you just barely dodged an attack in your cramped confines.

Pulling up the menu, you moved to the act area and…

What?

Just 'Check' and 'Courage'?

How are you supposed to progress? They guess you could wait it out like with King?

Choosing 'Courage,' Kris felt their defense raise drastically, as Susie and Toriel did their actions as well.

Faster soul speed and flame barriers, very helpful!

They can do this!

———

They cannot do this.

It was going well before.

Tenna had dropped to his knees as he panted out billows and billows of steam, his screen filled with static. His electricity had slowly grown weaker and weaker over the course of the fight, slowly sputtering into small currents that felt more like a pinch than anything dangerous.

His body shook, trembling as he struggled against an automatic shutdown. He'd gotten too hot, and now his systems were failing.

Kris had let out a shaky exhale at the sight, ready to sheath their sword and end this fight when…

"RAMB! MIKE!"

The TV called out, voice crackling horribly.

"GET OVER HERE!"

The power strip slowly walked in from the left, an irritated and confused look on his face. "Oi, what's with the shouting, luv?" The small darkener stood by his boss's side. "Am I finally useful to you?" He smirked.

Tenna grit his teeth in annoyance, fangs bared. Ignoring him, he focused on Mike, (the small one,) peeking through at the right.

“Cool me off,” He snapped at the microphone. “NOW!”

Mike flinched and saluted, disappearing for a moment only to reappear up with a step ladder and a couple ice packs. They landed unceremoniously onto the TV’s head, sizzling.

“Here ya go, boss!” The darkener shouts, already fleeing from the room and his very pissed employer.

Tenna sighs in relief as he cools down, steam slowly stopping.

Ramb crosses his arms, sighing. “What am I here for then? You’re acting like a right wanker-“

A plug suddenly shoots out and into the power strip's face.

“Sorry not sorry, Ramb,” Tenna slowly stands up, wiping down his dress shirt. Like magic, all the exhaustion seems to melt away. “But I need a little boost of energy.”

Ramb transforms into a werewire, tugging at the plug sluggishly. The plug that runs up and into Tenna’s lower back, that's usually hidden from sight and tucked into his pants.

“Well,” Comes the werewire’s muffled voice. “Thizzt is a bit rude, innit.”

The TV’s antenna pin back. He growls. “Of course you can still talk…”

Susie gapes at it all, completely speechless.

Kris can feel their heart in their throat, dread building up in their stomach.

Toriel watches on, confused and nervous.

Susie coughs, finding her voice. “A-alright,” She turns to Kris, brows furrowed as she frowns. “Kris! Let’s do what we did last time! Let me throw you!”

The human nods, readying their sword as Susie picks them up. The lizard tosses them with all her might, and Kris is aimed perfectly at the cord, ready to slice it off.

But at the last moment, it moves out of the way, yanking Ramb with it.

“Hey!” Tenna shouts, grabbing his tail and holding it close. “Are you trying to kill me or something?!” He lets go of it, reaching up to straighten his tie and sighing when he realizes it’s not there.

“Stupid exposed wires…” He grumbles, snapping his fingers and shooting out large laughing stars. supercharged from the power he’s

getting from Ramb. “This is why I hide them!”

Kris tenses up as you get hit, feeling the full force of the attack onto them. Just one hit and half of their health is gone!

Susie grimaces, wincing at the sight. Toriel growls at Tenna, summoning more flames to protect her child.

Just as they almost get hit again, Susie throws her axe like a boomerang, deflecting the attack… Only for a Tenna to summon a bolt of lightning immediately after, electrifying her weapon and shocking her when it returns.

———

The battle continues on, becoming harder and harder to defend against as it goes on. The attacks were so much worse now. Sometimes, Tenna uses Ramb as an attack, lifting him up with his tail and letting the excess electricity shoot out, sizzling past.

“Dammit…” Susie’s groans, shaking out her frizzed up hair. “We’ll never beat him like this.” Her face falls, shoulders drooping. “If only Ralsei was here, he could use pacify…”

Kris couldn’t help but nod in agreement. Ralsei always left before they sealed the fountain, so of course he wouldn’t know they were fighting right now. The last two times were smooth sailing, just a quick seal and that's it.

But, of course, something had to go wrong. Like always.

They didn't want to be here right now. They wanted to retreat back into that silent darkness. To sleep and let you do whatever with them.

Maybe it's bad they gave up but…

They were just so tired of everything.

…

"It doesn't have to be like this!"

..?

'…Mom?'

Toriel waved her hand, as if to dispel any negative thoughts from the room. Her face was one of pure determination. "Stop fighting. There is no reason for such needless violence!"

Tenna takes a step back, shocked. His screen flickers before it loses its mouth, becoming unreadable. "But, you don't understand-"

"No buts, young man!" She shouted, causing Tenna to jolt in place as his screen turned red. "There is no point to this, you are just wasting our time!"

It's silent for a long moment, the tension in the air thick enough to cut.

The TV's antenna dropped forward, hitting his screen with a clink. "… You're right." His voice is barely a whisper as he speaks. "There is no point in this… I AM just wasting everyone's time."

He pauses.

"I'm sorry."

Toriel nods, lowering her hands as he magic dispels. Nothing beats a good old motherly scolding-

"…for this!" He snaps and three more plastic balls encase the whole party.

"HEY!" Susie pounds on her prison, her axe destroyed once the plastic snapped shut. The pieces lay on the ground, splintered and broken. "Let us out, you- You psycho!"

Shaking his head, Tenna sighs. "I really am sorry." His screen flickers, a wobbly smile growing on his screen. With a long stride, he crosses the battlefield, picking up both Susie and Toriel's gachapons.

He rubs the tops of them gently. "…but this is for the best. No more distractions. No more wasting time trying to fight with you all." Setting them back down, a croquet mallet appearing in his hand.

Ignoring the panicked pleas, Tenna winds up his shot, raising his arms high up! …and gently tapping the plastic balls out of the room. He watches them roll away, leaning on the mallet.

"Ta ta!" He waves as they slowly go out of sight. "See you later, my dear viewers! Soon this will all be a bad dream…"

He stares off long after they're gone. Exhaling softly, he turns to the last two balls. One with Kris, and one with… it. Just looking at it infuriates him. This is what has been making Kris upset.

What has been ruining everything.

"Oh Kris…" The mallet disappears as he steps forward, shoes clacking on the pitch black floor. Ramb drags behind him, too tired to fight back. He stops just between the two of them. He smiles at the human, soft and sweet. "I swear, this'll all be over soon, Buttercup."

Kris rested their head against the clear plastic of their prison, shoulders slumped. Once again, they are rendered helpless. Even you are useless in this case. You can't act, you can't fight.

There's nothing you can do.

But, maybe…

Tenna kneels down in front of Kris, hands gripping his pants tightly. Water from the ice packs on top of him drips down his screen, causing his body to jolt randomly.

“I can- I can fix this…” He says, face falling. “I’m marvelous, I’m mysterious! I can do anything!” His antenna pin back, bending against his chassis. “I can save you… and then maybe…”

His voice lowers to a shaky whisper, unsure and desperate. “…Maybe you can save me.”

“Tenna.”

The TV tilts his head up, a small frown on his screen. Kris is staring directly at him, and for a moment, it's as if they made true eye contact. As if seeing into his very soul.

It was uncomfortable, like Kris had dug around his circuits and wires and just plopped everything wrong with him out onto display.

It was freeing, knowing someone could see every part of him, cobwebs and all, and still be unwavering in their gaze. Like he wasn't junk or garbage, but something valuable, something worth a damn.

“It’s gonna be ok, Tenna.” Kris says, placing a hand against the barrier separating them. The wall Tenna placed around them.

The darkener frowns deeper, heating up again. More water runs down his screen. “But it’s not!” He cries. “It’s not because you’re not happy and if you’re not happy..!”

“…”

He wipes at his glass, sniffing. “Then that means… I really am trash. I can’t fulfill my purpose anymore…”

Kris looks down, expression unreadable. They open their mouth, then close it. Sighing, they whisper. “You don’t… have to make other people happy.”

Tenna shakes his head, antenna flicking. “But that's my purpo-“

“That stuff's junk, okay?” They scoff, thinking about their own ‘purpose.’ To be a vessel for you. A puppet. Maybe they can’t cut their strings… but they refuse to give up.

They had a moment of weakness for a bit there, but seeing Tenna? Seeing how much he cared, even in his own stupid way by trying to murder you so they’d be free…

Maybe it’s dumb but.

It gives them hope.

Hope that they can be free, that they can be themself again.

“You have to stop focusing on making other people happy.” The human’s hand instinctively raised up to their head, resting just where they’re headband used to be when they were younger. “…It won’t work, and you’ll just be unhappy either way.”

They can feel something bubbling up within them, a fiery feeling deep

in their bones. It shines bright through their eyes as a beautiful red light. Determination.

“Live for yourself, for me.”

Tenna gapes at them, stiffening up. “Kris…”

Kris smirks weakly, sniffling. “You have control over your actions, so…”

The TV’s chassis furrows. He really doesn’t want to, but…

Tenna sighs. “…Alright. I’ll do it for you, buttercup.” He frowns, his tail flicking, making Ramb groan.

Suddenly, he feels something bumping into him. Looking down, the TV sees you, tapping against the plastic and pushing against his back.

Tenna growls, swiping at it with his claws. “I almost forgot about this little vermin.” He snarls, his speakers crackling and popping. His antenna flatten back against his chassis, bumping into the half melted ice packs on top of him.

“I’m gonna kill-“

“NO!”

Tenna flinches, claws and fangs disappearing in a blink. He looks

down at Kris, who is pressed up against the bubble, desperately scratching at the surface. His chest hurts at the sight, components whirring softly.

“Please…” They beg. “I need it to live.” Their voice is hoarse, choked out as if by force.

He lowers his hand slowly, a heartbroken look on his screen.

They sit in silence for a moment, both equally upset and awkward. Tenna breaks it first, clearing his speakers.

“What are we- you going to do with it, then?” He asks, gesturing to the beat up gachapon behind him.

Kris shrugs half heartedly, sitting down cross legged in their plastic bubble. “…I have to let it back in.” They smirk weakly. “Just gotta wait, and then one day, I’ll be able to get rid of it and go prank someone.”

Tenna chuckles softly, tracing designs into the black ground. His screen flickers, face falling. “When did you… become so mature?”

They smiled, tilting their head to the side. Their hair flips over their face, but they aren’t bothered. “Not sure pranking someone counts as mature.”

The darkener laughs more genuinely this time, pushing the bubbled human away with a finger. “You know what I mean, Kris!” He pauses, screen turning blank.

“You're still so strong, even… even after all this.”

He sighs, hunching in on himself. “I don’t think I could…”

Kris frowns, looking down thoughtfully. “You’ve been through a lot, too.” They sigh. “Don’t lower your own achievements just to put me on a pedestal…” They tense their shoulders. “…I don’t deserve it.”

“What?!” Tenna shouts, shaking his head furiously. He grabs the ball and pulls it close to his screen, his nose pressed flat against it. “Of course you do! You’re amazing! Marvelous! Mysterious!” His screen tints pink.

“…You’re all I aspire to be!”

The humans face flushes, a light pink spreading across their cheeks as well. Flustered, they pick at their fingernails. “I’m really not… it’s my soul that is.”

The TV grimaces, glancing back at you. “I don’t care about that thing. I care about YOU, Kris.” He looks at his hands, clenching and unclenching them around the ball nervously. “You… are perfect, just as you are!”

Kris smiles, sniffling. “Thanks, Tenna. You're the best TV a person could ask for.”

Grinning bright and wide, Tenna coos. “Aww, you really think that, buttercup?!” He nuzzled his screen against the plastic, causing static

to build up inside. The human's hair slowly lifted from their head, floating as if pulled towards the darkener. "You're the best family member a TV could ask for!"

"Uh, can we wrap this up, luvs?" A muffled voice comes from behind.

Both of them turn to look at Ramb, who is sitting with his arms crossed angrily, half laying on the floor.

"Oh." The TV sets the gachapon down, his screen turning back to its pale white glow. "I forgot you were here."

Ramb sighs. "Evidently."

With his antenna pinning back, Tenna's tail popped out of the power strip's face, making the darkener shrink back down to normal.

Rubbing their cheek, Ramb groans and storms off, muttering something about quitting. Irked, Tenna scoffs and raises his nose up at them. If they want to be so dramatic, then he won't stop them!

Kris watches him go, thinking silently. They open their mouth for a moment, only for their voice to crack, causing Tenna to coo again at them. Embarrassed, they clear their throat and try again.

"S-speaking of leaving…" They say, staring pointedly at the dark fountain.

"Oh!" The CRT jolts, remembering the very important thing they were

doing before. Sealing the fountain before the Knight came. His face flushes. “R-righto buddy… here, let me just…”

He snaps his fingers, releasing every gachapon. You float around in loops, buzzing like a happy bee. You attempt to nuzzle yourself into the giant darkener, but he backs away quickly with a grimace.

“Just uh, do your thing, chicken wing!”

Nodding as best as you could, you fly back to the fountain, ready to try to once again seal this thing! As you slowly float forward, Tenna looks down at Kris, who moved to stand next to him.

“Y’know,” He says, smiling awkwardly. “I would’ve thought that the Knight would be here by now-“

Slash.

The last thing he sees is the world turning white as Kris’ wide eyes stare shocked at him. Their beautiful scarlet gems shining multicolored light right back at him.

———

They’re back in the light world now.

They stand in front of their TV. Its antenna has been sliced off.

Someone stands behind them.

A hand rests upon their shoulder. It squeezes once and falls away.

Susie and Toriel lay around them, knocked unconscious while Tenna distracted them.

They have shattered plastic balls around them.

Whoever is behind them walks off.

They leave.

Chapter End Notes

Next is the epilogue.

Thank you for reading, please comment, it fuels me!!!

Fixing the stars up for you, one day.

Chapter Summary

Two stars meet again in the dark world.

Chapter Notes

Its finally here. Sorry it took so long.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

For a while, it was dark.

A pure black, inky void.

No sounds, no colors.

Just… nothing.

…

And then, with a crackling pop, he could see again.

“He’s working, he’s working!”

Susie?

Something shuffled around behind him, and it was then he realized his chassis was open. A hand rested on some of his wires, and the sensation made his skin want to crawl.

Or…

Toriel came around into view, wearing her church clothes. There was a toolbox in her hand, and she seemed tired.

This is the light world… he’s just a TV now. He has no skin to crawl.

She stood by the purple lizard, resting her free paw on her hip. “Well, I think that’s the best I can do for now.” She sighs, wiping her forehead. “I’ll have to order some replacement parts, if they still sell them anyway…”

Toriel turns to Susie and smiles, a glimmer of a proud light in her eyes. “Good job on the antenna, Susie! Very creative!”

Susie looks away, blushing. “Ah, well…” she scratches the back of her head with her claws. “I just used what you had on hand…”

Giggling, Toriel points to something above him. “Yes, but the bandaids are quite cute, are they not?”

While Susie stammers on, flustered by the praise, he takes the time to inspect himself, as much as he can anyway.

Obviously, his chassis is open, all his insides and wires exposed to the open air. It’s uncomfortable, but apparently necessary. He… can’t really feel his antenna at the moment.

Didn’t Toriel say something about Susie putting bandaids on them? What happened to warrant that?

Something was wrapped around his power cable as well, but this time he could clearly feel that there was a cut in it. God, it hurts like hel-heck! It hurts like heck!

He was plugged back into Ramb, at least. Maybe… it’ll stay like this now?

The sound of the front door opening caught everyone’s attention. Kris stood there with a rusty red wagon behind them.

Toriel clapped her hands happily. “Oh Kris! You finally found that old thing, did you?” Setting the toolbox down, she wandered over to their side, inspecting the wagon. “It’s been years since you played with this. I would’ve expected it to have rotted inside that old shed by now.”

Susie joined them, tilting her head at the sight. “Jeez, that thing looks nasty. Shouldn’t we clean it out first before putting him in it?”

…What.

Kris looked down into the wagon, then up at the TV, then back down at the wagon. A smile grew on their face.

“…Nah, it’s fine.”

He could feel dread building up in his wires. There’s no way Kris would let him get dirty, right? Right?

As Toriel walked over and closed up his back, (thank the Angel,) Kris stared at him with the most shit eating grin he’s ever seen.

He nearly expected devil horns to sprout from their head!

Chassis secured, the goat reaches forward and presses his off button.

His world is blackened once again.

No longer able to see or hear, he can only rely on touch to guide him.

‘Oh Angel, oh Angel…’ he thinks, as he feels himself getting picked up by multiple pairs of hands. ‘Please don’t be gross…’

He’s set down softly into what he assumes is the wagon and, oh, it’s just dusty. That's… fine.

He’s used to dust.

Suddenly, the world shakes and bumps, and he’s moving again.

Wait.

Where are they taking him?

Oh god, this is it. He’s finally going to the garbage dump. They fixed him up so he could be alive and then are gonna throw him away!

He’d cry if he wasn’t just a big, stupid electrical box!

The movement stops, and someone carefully wraps their arms around him.

This must be their goodbye hug… oh why! Why must this happen to him!

He’s lifted up and panic fills his cathode.

No, he’s not ready, no, no, no-!

And then he can see again, falling down, down, down into darkness.

His body is back, and while his arms don’t seem to be working at the moment, they're there and wonderful and beautiful.

He never wants to be without a body again!

Landing screen first onto the ground, Tenna lets out a sigh of relief.

He’s safe…

Or…

He lifts his head, looking around. It's dark, with the only light around coming from above and an entry way in front of him.

…So he thinks?

Where is he?

Footsteps come from uphead, someone having heard the fall. He tries to scramble backwards, but instead just flails. His arms refused to cooperate.

Closer and closer the person came, the light behind the casting hard shadows across their front. He turned off his screen, turning his head away from the figure. They were probably an axe murderer or something!

Those types of people are very common, why else would there be so many movies and shows about them?!

"Mr. Tenna?"

His screen flickered back on. Ralsei stared back at him with a gentle yet concerned smile. "Are you alright Mr. Tenna?"

Tenna could feel himself start to heat up, his face tinting pink. How embarrassing!

"A-ah, yes!" He stammers, putting on his brightest smile . "I'm perfectly fine, so fine in fact…!" He pauses, grin faltering. "…I can't exactly feel my arms at the moment."

Ralsei's mouth forms an 'o' in shock. "Oh no! Let me help you!"

Green light fills his paw, and sparkles flutter over him. Pins and needles fill his arms, and he pulls them inward, as if to run from the feeling.

Belatedly, he realizes that they actually worked again.

"That should last for a bit," The prince says, helping the TV off the ground. "At least until we can get you to an Ambyu-lance."

Finally sitting up, the TV looks around curiously. "Where are we? This dark world feels… pretty nice actually."

Ralsei smiles, “Oh, this is castle town, home of the purest dark fountain!” His hands clasp together in innocent pride. “All of our friends come to live here when their dark worlds get sealed-“ Giggling he raises a paw to his lips. “Even you, Mr. Tenna!”

Tenna felt his screen flicker in shock, his jaw dropping. “R-really?” He stammers, pushing himself up to stand. “You aren’t going to… abandon me? Even after…”

Exhaling softly, Ralsei looks away. Just then, someone yells from above.

“LOOK OUT BELOOOOOW!!!”

They both scramble away from the opening, watching as Susie, Kris, and Toriel float down onto the ground.

Holding a hand to her mouth, Toriel’s face takes on a green hue. “That was…” She murmurs, inhaling deeply. “Not pleasant.”

Susie snickers, walking backwards with her arms behind her neck. “Heh, you’ll get used to it, right Kr-“ She bumps into Tenna, getting shocked by static in the process.

A full body shudder runs through her.

Tenna stiffens, his cathode buzzing loudly, like it’s going to break out of his chest and scream. He grins nervously, all of his teeth on full display across his screen. Taking a shaky step back, he chuckles.

“H-hey, there sweetheart! Long time no see, huh pal?” His antenna bent.

Susie looks up, a single bead of sweat running down her cheek. “Oh… hey, dude! Good to see you’re okay!”

The TV’s screen turns black. “…What?” Flickering back on, his posture slackens, slumping forward in disbelief. “Are you mad at me?”

“Oh, I’m pissed!” She grins sharply, before it falters. She glances over at Kris, an annoyed expression on her face. “…But Kris explained what happened and, well, I can’t stay too mad at that.”

Toriel nods, looking at Kris exasperatedly. “Even though it was meant to be a prank, I did not find the humor in pretending Kris was ‘possessed.’” She sighs. “The fact they even had time to plan this says

something, but I'm not sure what…"

.

'A prank?'

"What does that mean???" He asks, placing his hands on his chassis. "Funny? While I love to entertain that wasn't-" He stutters, cutting himself off.

Behind the other two lightners stands Kris. They are still and motionless, mouth perfectly still as a tight line. And yet…

Their gaze pierces through him.

Something about it tells him that maybe…

…He should just go along with it.

"Ha…" Tenna laughs weakly, slowly sliding his hands down. "Haha. Hahaha! Yeppers! That was totally just a prank!" He bows down low, hoping no one will see the expression on his screen. "I'm a great actor, aren't I? Why, it probably felt real to you!"

(It was all real…)

(Wasn't it…?)

His arms tremble again, though this time it's not from his frayed wires, metaphorically. It was literally, however.

Ralsei notices it almost immediately, gripping a paw tightly onto his pant leg. "Oh no, the magic is already wearing off!" He begins to pull the giant darkner towards the town, using shocking strength. "Let's get you to a doctor, quick!"

"W-wait!" Tenna stammers, glances back at the lightners. "I'm not done! I haven't shown the crediiiiitttsss!!!" He falls over onto his chest, digging his claws into the ground and leaving groves as he's taken away.

———

After his 'doctors visit,'— (he hissed and scratched at the ambyulance until it finally offered him a delicious jello cup that he slurped up while occasionally growling as they checked him over. At least he didn't get the cone this time…) —The prince showed him to his own

personal room in the castle.

It had everything he needed, from a giant him-sized bed, to a vanity, and even a big walk in closet with different outfits. Plus anything from TV-world that didn't already have an owner. (He breathed a sigh of relief seeing That specific closet in the corner of his room. He'll check on it later when no one's around.)

Taking a moment to collect himself, he easily changed out of his (frankly ruined) clothes and opted for something much more comfortable- a simple star patterned button up shirt, some shorts, and flip-flops.

Looking in the vanity mirror, he tilted his head with a small grin. He looks like Asgore! Just add a beard and tada!!! Snickering, he walks out of his room only to immediately run into Kris.

Ralsei says hello, and whatever Kris responds with makes him blink, before nodding and leaving without a word.

Tenna looks down at them, confused.

The human looks up at him blankly, but by now, he knows that's not what they're truly feeling.

"Hey, Buttercup…" The TV says, lowering his volume to keep away prying ears. "What're you doing here without your pals? Didcha wanna talk to lil' ole me about… last night?"

You nod.

His vents whirr softly. "Alright." He takes a step back, holding his door open. "Let's go somewhere private."

———

Kris is sat upon his bed, almost drowning in the plush comforter. They look so tiny in the sea of fabric. It makes his cathode buzz pleasantly at the sight, and he just wants to give their little cheek a pinch.

But he can't do that now.

They need to talk.

"So," he starts, carefully sitting next to them. Their whole body dips towards him, resting on his hip. He chuckles at the little shock it produces.

“Here, let me just…” He smiles, gently picking the human up and placing them on his knee. “There! That’s much better!”

Tenna’s grin falters, remembering what they were here for. “…Now,” His chassis furrows, “…Why did you lie to them? A prank? Was…” a flicker of static crosses his screen. “Did you lie to me too?”

Kris looks down, exhaling deeply. They don’t know how to explain to him that they can’t know without the darkner questioning it or-

Or convincing them maybe they should know. That they could help them. That they didn’t have to do it this way.

Of course, all of their worries are for naught, because they can’t exactly answer him anyway.

You shake your head, hesitantly. If Tenna notices, he says nothing. Instead, he sighs and flips onto his back, stretching out over the bed. The impact makes them bounce a bit on his leg, but they don’t fall off.

“…This was stupid.” He says, rubbing a hand over his screen. “I should’ve known.” It falls back to his side as he stares up at the ceiling. Glow in the dark stars litter it, similar to Kris’ own bedroom.

They glow brightly, even in the lit up bedroom.

“Even if it was true or a lie, you wouldn’t answer.” Kris looks at him for a while, before they slowly lower themself down, mimicking the TV’s position.

From here, they can hear all the whirring and shifting of all his delicate innards, buzzing away to keep his old body running. His whole body is constantly covered in static energy, but more specifically his chassis and screen.

It feels fluffy.

They run their hand through it, hovering just about his plastic skin. Slowly, they feel their hair start to raise and stick.

“…I’ve never seen real stars before.” Tenna murmurs, quiet and soft. Their hand pauses in its movement.

“Sure, it’s shown in movies or TV documentaries… but it’s not the same, y’know?” He frowns. “Just pixels on a screen- MY screen. Not the same as having them reflected upon it.”

“You’ll see the stars one day.” You answer, sounding horribly corny, and yet… Kris can’t help but agree, chuckling internally.

Evidently, Tenna feels the same. His chest rumbles with a snicker, his speakers crackling just slightly.

“Of course.” He pushes himself up, grinning down at them. It’s almost blinding. “One day, you and me both, we’ll have a day just to ourselves, with a picnic and games… Oh, if we do that, we’ll have to invite Susie as well, plus, we can’t leave Ralsei AND Toriel out, too-!”

Hearing him ramble on happily, Kris lets a smile take over their face.

Tenna sure was weird, but he was the best family they could ask for.

Chapter End Notes

> If you’ve made it this far, THANK YOU. Genuinely. I could’ve never imagined my stupid little one shot would get this popular. This has been an amazing journey, writing this fic for you and, most importantly, myself. I’m so thankful for all the comments and kudos and bookmarks. I love this wonderful community with all my heart, so thank you, once again!
>
> And if you want more of this, I’m officially making this an AU! ‘The Family TV AU!’ I’ll post more little one shots, possibly two shots, all about after canon! So if you are interested, look out!

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!